

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 IO-13 /075 W
-----081612Z 125325 /44

R 081347Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC4469
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0721

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, GY
SUBJECT: GUYANA CABINET RESHUFFLE AND REORGANIZATION

REF: (A) GEORGETOWN 0656, (B) GEORGETOWN 0599

SUMMARY: THREE CABINET MINISTERS HAVE BEEN REASSIGNED AS
GOVERNMENT CONSULTANTS, ONE NEW MINISTER HAS BEEN APPOINTED,
AND PORTFOLIOS OF SEVERAL MINISTERIES HAVE BEEN REORGANIZED AS
OF APRIL 2. THE CHANGES, ALLEGEDLY TO IMPROVE EFFICIENCY,
HAVE POLITICAL OVERTONES AND HAVE REPORTEDLY EXACERBATED
RIVALRIES WITHIN THE RULING PNC. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTERIES WERE REORGANIZED AS FOLLOWS:

--THE LABOR, HEALTH, AND HOUSING FUNCTIONS WHICH WERE IN
THREE MINISTERIES, WERE CONSOLIDATED INTO A NEW MINISTRY.

--MINISTRY OF WORKS LOST HOUSING BUT WAS COMBINED WITH
TRANSPORT.

--MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES AND NATIONAL MOBILISATION

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HAS BEEN ABOLISHED. MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT HAS
TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR CO-OPERATIVES, AND MINISTRY OF
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR NATIONAL
MOBILISATION.

--CULTURE HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
AND PLACED IN A NEW MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SOCIAL DEVELOP-
MENT, AND CULTURE.

--MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND AID WHICH WERE FORMERLY HANDLED BY MINISTRIES OF TRADE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESPECTIVELY.

2. RESHUFFLE OF MINISTERS:

-- VINCENT TEEKAH HAS REPLACED CECILENE BAIRD AS MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE. BAIRD IS NOW EDUCATION CONSULTANT TO GOVERNMENT AND PRO-CHANCELLOR OF UNIVERSITY OF GUYANA.

--HAMILTON GREEN HAS BECOME MINISTER OF LABOR, HEALTH, AND HOUSING. FORMER MINISTER OF HEALTH OLIVER HARPER HAS BEEN REASSIGNED AS GOVERNMENT CONSULTANT ON MEDIACA, DENTAL, AND PUBLIC HEALTH TRAINING. FORMER MINISTER OF LABOR WINSLOW CARRINGTON BECOMES DIRECTOR OF CRITCHLOW LABOR COLLEGE AND CO-ORDINATOR OF WORKER EDUCATION.

--OTHER CABINET POSITION REMAIN UNCHANGED.

3. MINISTERS OF STATE WHO WERE AFFECTED BY CABINET RESHUFFLE INCLUDE:

--ROBERT CORBIN AND JEFFREY THOMAS WILL JOIN CABINET AS MINISTERS OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTRY OF LABOR, HEALTH, AND HOUSING RESPECTIVELY.

--PHILIP DUNCAN , AN AMERINDIAN, IS NOW MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR AMERINDIAN AFFAIRS.

--MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE MOHAMED KASIM AND MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION WILLIAM HAYNES HAVE BEEN RELIEVED OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THEIR PORTFOLIOS, SUPPOSEDLY AT THEIR REQUEST, BUT WILL CONTINUE AS PARLIAMENTARIANS.

-- KIT NASCIMENTO ,MINISTER OF STATE IN OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER, NOW HAS SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR UPPER MAZARUNI ROAD PROJECT AND ALL MOBILE MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT IN PUBLIC SECTOR.

4. THERE ARE NOW FIVE REGIONAL MINISTERS: JOSHUA CHOWRITMOOTOO FOR ESSEQUIBO, KEN BANCROFT FOR MAZARUNI-POTARO, ABDUL SALIM FOR EAST DEMERARA AND WEST BERBICE, FITZ CARMICHAEL FOR NORTHWEST, AND OSCAR CLARKE FOR EAST BERBICE AND CORENTIYEN.

5. COMMENT: CABINET CHANGES ARE APPARENTLY EFFORT TO RATIONALIZE PORTFOLIOS AND IMPROVE IMAGE AND PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO ELECTIONS, BUT THEY ALSO MEET INTERNAL POLITICAL NEEDS. IN-FIGHTING CONCERNING CABINET CHANGES APPEARS TO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO INCREASED DIVISION WITHIN PNC. RESHUFFLE HAS CREATED AIR OF UNCERTAINTY AT MIDDLE

AND UPPER LEVELS OF MINISTRIES CONCERNING FUTURES OF PERSONS LINKED TO PREVIOUS MINISTERS. THE FULL CONSEQUENCES OF RESHUFFLE ARE NOT YET CLEAR.

6. GREEN HAS BEEN ACCUSED OF NOT BEING A SOCIALIST, AND REPORTEDLY WAS TO BE SHUNTED OFF TO NIGERIA AS HIGH COMMISSIONER, BUT REFUSED TO GO. HE HAS CRITICIZED GUYANA'S STRESS ON NON-ALIGNMENT AS NOT CONTRIBUTING TO THE NATION'S PRIMARY INTEREST IN OBTAINING ECONOMIC AID, AND HE REPORTEDLY FAVORS A ROLE FOR PRIVATE ENTERPRISE HERE. GREEN RECENTLY HAS BEEN FRIENDLY TOWARDS US OFFICIALS, BUT ANY POSITIVE VALUE HE MAY HAVE FOR US MUST BE BALANCED AGAINST HIS POSITION IN CABINET AND PNC AS AMBITIOUS POTENTIAL RIVAL TO BURNHAM. BY OVERLOADING GREEN WITH RESPONSIBILITIES IN THREE AREAS WITH SERIOUS EXISTING PROBLEMS, BURNHAM MAY BE SIMPLY TRYING TO END GREEN'S POLITICAL CAREER.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 GEORGETOWN 0721

7. TEEKAH WAS A PPP IDEOLOGUE AND ITS LEADING EDUCATION SPOKESMAN BEFORE HE TRANSFERRED TO THE PNC. HE IS HEARTILY DISLIKED IN THE PPPN WHERE HE IS REGARDED AS A TURNCOAT. HIS APPOINTMENT IS FURTHER INDICATION THAT BURNHAM'S EFFORTS TO COAX JAGAN AND THE PPP INTO A "NATIONAL UNITY" GOVERNMENT HAVE FALTERED FOR THE TIME BEING. BY TAKING AN EX-PPP MEMBER INTO HIS CABINET, BURNHAM IS SIGNALLING TO JAGAN'S SUBORDINATES THAT THEY TOO MIGHT EXPECT REWARDS SHOULD THEY DECIDE TO CROSS THE AISLE. THE CABINET NOW HAS THREE EAST INDIANS. PNC LEADERS ARE BELATEDLY

REALIZING THE NEED TO BUILD BRIDGES TO THE EAST
INDIAN COMMUNITY; NOWEVER, TOKENISM AT THIS LATE DATE
PROBABLY WILL NOT BE OF MUCH HELP IN WINNING EAST
INDIAN SUPPORT BEFORE THE 1978 ELECTIONS.

8. THE CABINET CHANGES MAY HAVE EXACERBATED PERSONAL
RIVALRIES IN THE PNC. TEEKAH'S APPOINTMENT IN PARTICULAR
HAS CAUSED EXPRESSIONS OF DISSATISFACTION. SOME PNC
FOLLOWERS THOUGHT THAT A CABINET JOB SHOULD NOT
GO TO A RECENT PPP DEFECTEE. PNC EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,
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ELVIN MCDAVID, WHO HAS EMERGED AS AN INFLUENTIAL
PARTY FIGURE IN RECENT MONTHS IS UPSET THAT HE DID NOT
OBTAIN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION PORTFOLIO. AS A
SECOND CHOICE, HE WANTED TO BE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, BUT WILL OPPOSE THAT. SHIRLEY
FIELD-RIDLEY ORIGINALLY WAS TO HAVE GONE TO THE MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION BUT THE DECISION TO GIVE IT TO TEEKAH BLOCKED
THAT. NEXT FIELD-RIDLEY WAS TO BE DROPPED ENTIRELY, BUT
HER HUSBAND, HAMILTON GREEN, OBJECTED VEHEMENTLY INDICATING
THAT IF SHE WERE LEFT OUT HE WOULD ALSO DROP OUT OF THE
CABINET. THEREUPON, BURNHAM DECIDED TO LEAVE FIELD-RIDLEY
IN CHARGE OF THE INFORMATION MINISTRY, AFTER CULTURE WAS
TRANSFERRED TO THE EDUCATION MINISTER.

9. IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT WHAT THIS NEW MIX IN THE
CABINET WILL SIGNIFY FOR THE GOG'S IDEOLOGICAL DIRECTION.
GREEN, A RELATIVE CONSERVATIVE IN ECONOMICS MATTERS, HAS
GAINED MORE FUNCTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES. BUT TEEKAH IS
AN IDEOLOGICAL LEFTIST. FONMIN WILLS, A MODERATE
SOCIALIST, ALSO HAS GAINED RESPONSIBILITIES. MCDAVID
WHO IS REGARDED AS BEING RADICAL DID NOT RISE, BUT
CORBIN DID. THE CHANGES WILL BE ANALYZED IN GREATER
DEPTH IN A FUTURE MESSAGE.
BLACKEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 GEORGETOWN 656, 77 GEORGETOWN 599
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 24-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2859894
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUYANA CABINET RESHUFFLE AND REORGANIZATION
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, GY, (GREEN, HAMILTON), (TEEKAH, VINCENT), (CORBIN, ROBERT), (THOMAS, JEFFREY), (NASCIMENTO, KIT), (CHOWRITMOOTOO, JOSHUA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009